IN THE CLAIMS

The status of each claim in the present application is listed below.

1. (Original) An optical recording medium comprising:

a substrate,

a noble-metal oxide layer provided on the substrate,

a first dielectric layer provided on a light-incidence plane side when viewed from the noble-metal oxide layer

and a second dielectric layer provided on the side opposite to the light-incidence plane when viewed from the noble-metal oxide player,

the second dielectric layer containing ZnS or a mixture of ZnS and SiO_2 as a main component, wherein the proportion of ZnS to the sum of ZnS and SiO_2 is set at a value from 60 mole % to 100 mole %.

2. (Original) An optical recording medium as described in claim 1, further comprising, on the side opposite to the light-incidence plane when viewed from the second dielectric layer, a light absorption layer and a third dielectric layer arranged in this order when viewed from the second dielectric layer.

3. (Original) An optical recording medium as described in claim 2, further comprising a reflective layer provided between the substrate and the third dielectric layer.

4. (Original) An optical recording medium as described in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the noble-metal oxide layer contains platinum oxide (PtOx).

5. (Currently Amended) An optical recording medium as described in claim 2 ~~any of claims 2 to 4~~, wherein the light absorption layer contains as a main component a material ~~which can be~~ represented by

$$(Sb_aTe_{1-a})_{1-b}MA_b$$

(wherein MA is an element other than antimony (Sb) and tellurium (Te), $0<a<1$ and $0\leq b<1$), and besides

which is different from an intermetallic compound represented by

$$\{(GeTe)_c(Sb_2Te_3)_{1-c}\}_dMB_{1-d}$$

(wherein MB is an element other than antimony (Sb), tellurium (Te) and germanium (Ge), c is 1/3, 1/2 or 2/3, and $0<d\leq 1$).

6. (Currently Amended) An optical recording medium as described in any of claims 1 to 3 ~~5~~, wherein a light-transmitting layer having the light-incidence plane is further provided on the side opposite to the substrate side when viewed from the first dielectric layer, the substrate is from 0.6 mm to 2.0 mm in thickness and the light-transmitting layer is from 10 μm to 200 μm in thickness.

7. (Original) A manufacturing method of an optical recording medium, comprising:

a first process of forming on a substrate a reflective layer, a third dielectric layer, a light absorption layer, a second dielectric layer, a noble-metal oxide layer and a first dielectric layer in the order of mention, and

a second process of forming a light-transmitting layer on the first dielectric layer,

and by incorporating ZnS or a mixture of ZnS and SiO_2 as a main component in the second dielectric layer, wherein the proportion of ZnS to the sum of ZnS and SiO_2 is set at a value from 60 mole % to 100 mole %.

8. (Original) A manufacturing method of an optical recording medium as described in claim 7, wherein the first process is carried out according to a vapor deposition method and the second process is carried out according to a spin coating method.

9. (Currently Amended) A data recording method in which data is recorded on an optical recording medium as described in any of claims 1 to 3 ~~6~~ by irradiation with a laser beam from the light-transmitting layer side,

wherein, when the wavelength of the laser beam is represented as λ and the numerical aperture of an objective lens for focusing the laser beam is represented as NA, λ/NA is set at 640 nm or below and a string of recording marks including recording marks λ/4NA or below in length is recorded.

10. (Currently Amended) A data reproducing method in which data is played back on an optical recording medium as described in any of claims 1 to 3 ~~6~~ by irradiation with a laser beam from the light-transmitting layer side,

wherein, when the wavelength of the laser beam is represented as λ and the numerical aperture of an objective lens for focusing the laser beam is represented as NA, λ/NA is set at 640 nm or below and the data is played back from a string of marks of recording including marks of recording λ/4NA or below in length.

11. (New) An optical recording medium as described in claim 3, wherein the light absorption layer contains as a main component a material represented by

$$(Sb_aTe_{1-a})_{1-b}MA_b$$

(wherein MA is an element other than antimony (Sb) and tellurium (Te), $0<a<1$ and $0\leq b<1$), and besides

which is different from an intermetallic compound represented by

$$\{(GeTe)_c(Sb_2Te_3)_{1-c}\}_dMB_{1-d}$$

(wherein MB is an element other than antimony (Sb), tellurium (Te) and germanium (Ge), c is 1/3, 1/2 or 2/3, and $0<d\leq 1$).

12. (New) An optical recording medium as described in claim 4, wherein the light absorption layer contains as a main component a material represented by

$$(Sb_aTe_{1-a})_{1-b}MA_b$$

(wherein MA is an element other than antimony (Sb) and tellurium (Te), $0<a<1$ and $0\leq b<1$), and besides

which is different from an intermetallic compound represented by

$$\{(GeTe)_c(Sb_2Te_3)_{1-c}\}_dMB_{1-d}$$

(wherein MB is an element other than antimony (Sb), tellurium (Te) and germanium (Ge), c is 1/3, 1/2 or 2/3, and $0<d\leq 1$).

13. (New) An optical recording medium as described in claim 4, wherein a light-transmitting layer having the light-incidence plane is further provided on the side opposite to the substrate side when viewed from the first dielectric layer, the substrate is from 0.6 mm to 2.0 mm in thickness and the light-transmitting layer is from 10 μm to 200 μm in thickness.

14. (New) An optical recording medium as described in claim 5, wherein a light-transmitting layer having the light-incidence plane is further provided on the side opposite to the substrate side when viewed from the first dielectric layer, the substrate is from 0.6 mm to 2.0 mm in thickness and the light-transmitting layer is from 10 μm to 200 μm in thickness.

15. (New) A data recording method in which data is recorded on an optical recording medium as described in claim 4 by irradiation with a laser beam from the light-transmitting layer side,

wherein, when the wavelength of the laser beam is represented as λ and the numerical aperture of an objective lens for focusing the laser beam is represented as NA, λ/NA is set at 640 nm or below and a string of recording marks including recording marks $\lambda/4NA$ or below in length is recorded.

16. (New) A data recording method in which data is recorded on an optical recording medium as described in claim 5 by irradiation with a laser beam from the light-transmitting layer side,

wherein, when the wavelength of the laser beam is represented as λ and the numerical aperture of an objective lens for focusing the laser beam is represented as NA, λ/NA is set at 640 nm or below and a string of recording marks including recording marks $\lambda/4NA$ or below in length is recorded.

17. (New) A data recording method in which data is recorded on an optical recording medium as described in claim 6 by irradiation with a laser beam from the light-transmitting layer side,

wherein, when the wavelength of the laser beam is represented as λ and the numerical aperture of an objective lens for focusing the laser beam is represented as NA, λ/NA is set at 640 nm or below and a string of recording marks including recording marks λ/4NA or below in length is recorded.

18. (New) A data reproducing method in which data is played back on an optical recording medium as described in claim 4 by irradiation with a laser beam from the light-transmitting layer side,

wherein, when the wavelength of the laser beam is represented as λ and the numerical aperture of an objective lens for focusing the laser beam is represented as NA, λ/NA is set at 640 nm or below and the data is played back from a string of marks of recording including marks of recording λ/4NA or below in length.

19. (New) A data reproducing method in which data is played back on an optical recording medium as described in claim 5 by irradiation with a laser beam from the light-transmitting layer side,

wherein, when the wavelength of the laser beam is represented as λ and the numerical aperture of an objective lens for focusing the laser beam is represented as NA, λ/NA is set at 640 nm or below and the data is played back from a string of marks of recording including marks of recording λ/4NA or below in length.

20. (New) A data reproducing method in which data is played back on an optical recording medium as described in claim 6 by irradiation with a laser beam from the light-transmitting layer side,

wherein, when the wavelength of the laser beam is represented as λ and the numerical aperture of an objective lens for focusing the laser beam is represented as NA, λ/NA is set at 640 nm or below and the data is played back from a string of marks of recording including marks of recording λ/4NA or below in length.